

## Status quo... barely

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What has been, at least until yesterday, a World Cup full of surprises, has changed for only one day. However, it was not because of the will of the favorite team to assure its status in the tournament. It was a tense day, with last minute goals and many thrills to the Spanish selection. This was the line followed by this new chapter in Russia 2018.

The suspense was the main character in the Group B and the result was defined by sighs, mathematical results and tears shed. The Spanish and the Portuguese selections were having a very similar performance, leading the Group. They had the same amount of points, goals scored and goals against. Only the fair game would save the South Africa 2010's champions of resulting in a draw at the end of the third game, since the Red Fury had received less referee warning than the Portuguese team.

The games corresponding to both selections started as expected. The leaders of the Group began ahead, attempting to score and owning the bigger percent of ball possession. In Kaliningrado, the Spanish were behaving as usual: prioritizing passes and looking forward the goal opportunity. However, the Moroccan team took benefit of an error produced on the middle field and got ahead. The Spanish land shook after the goal scored by Khalid Boutaib (14'). The only reason that stopped Moroccan advantage was a goal by Isco four minutes later.

Nevertheless, the Spanish were having the same conditions shown in previous games. Even owning the ball possession, the fear of the Spanish was arriving. The "bogeyman" on guard was Youssef En-Nesyri who, just being ten minutes away of the game's end, silenced the shouts of the Spanish fans with a goal.

Meanwhile, at least two thousands kilometers away, in Saransk, Portugal was having good results. Ricardo Quaresma scored the Portuguese advantage close to the half time interval, with an awesome goal. Later on, the advantage of the Iranian team was echoing due to a failed penalty shoot kicked by Cristiano Ronaldo.

Later, in extra time, the Iranian made the score even from the penalty spot. Almost at the same time, in Kaliningrado, Spanish player Iago Aspas did the same, helped by the intervention of the VAR. The last thrill to the Portuguese team came after a shoot by Mehdi Torabi who failed the goal that could have saved the Iranian selection.

At the end, the men under the command of Fernando Hierro passed in first group position and will face the Russians, who were beat by the Uruguayans 3-0, in eight finals. On the other hand, the team led by CR 7 will be dealing with the Charruas, in a game that will excite all the fans in the Euro Asian giant and in our country to the very core.

### **Results 25 June:**

Uruguay 3-0 Russia (Suárez 10', Cheryshev 23' PP y Cavani 90'); Saudi Arabia 2-1 Egypt (Al-Faraj 45+6' P y Al-Dawsari 90+5' / Salah 22'); Spain 2-2 Morocco (Isco 19' y Aspas 90+3' / Boutaib 14' y En Nesry 81'); Iran 1-1 Portugal (Ansarifard 90+4' P / Quaresma 45')

Today's Games:

Denmark -France (10:00 a.m.): The French team is already classified to eight finals. This game resulting in a draw would be good enough to set them as group leaders however, this result would classified the Danish team as well, due to if they reach five points it would give them advantage over Australia.

Australia-Peru (10:00 a.m.): This will be a game of honor more than earning a pass to eight finals. The Australian team would win and await for the results of the others Group C game. Also, To Peru, it will be a redemption opportunity and the chance to score, at least, one goal that justifies its presence in the tournament

Iceland-Croatia (2:00 p.m.): Even though the Croat team is not risking anything, they would prefer to end this phase with their heads held high. However, the Iceland selection keeps their hopes to succeed but, for that, they would have to pray for a miracle.

Nigeria-Argentina (2:00 p.m.): The more appealing game of the day, which would define the opponent of the Croats. The Nigerians will fight for their classification and the Argentinean to maintain their pride and the respect to their symbolic national shirt.

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